

March 11, 1954

Dr. Alden H. Emery  
Secretary  
American Chemical Society  
1155 16 Street NW  
Washington 6, D. C.

Dear Doctor Emery:

On February 17, I wrote requesting information on the reasons for refusing Mme. Joliot-Curie membership in our society. I have not received a reply.

Since writing to you, I have had an opportunity to read the correspondence in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist including your own remarks. On the basis of what I have read in the N. Y. Times and in the Bulletin it would appear that Mme. Joliot-Curie has been refused membership because her husband belongs to the Communist party and because it is suspected that she also is a communist sympathizer.

I think that a great many (I hope the vast majority) of scientists feel as I do - namely, that membership in our learned societies should rest primarily on scientific merit and interest and that a given member's personal political and religious beliefs do not concern us. I have no doubt that Mme. Joliot-Curie's primary purpose in applying for membership was not to "foster public welfare" in the United States, to further "the development of United States industry" or "to add to the material prosperity and happiness of the American people". I presume that her primary purpose was to receive the Journal and the Abstracts at the reduced price granted to members. I imagine almost all foreign members (regardless of political opinions) also joined for this reason and so indeed did most Americans, including myself.

One of the things that most of us despise in Communist and Fascist regimes has been their attempt to impose party doctrines on scientists and members of the learned professions. In refusing Mme. Joliot-Curie membership, it seems to me the American Chemical Society has taken a big step in this same direction. I would like to request that the admissions committee and the Directors seriously reconsider Mme. Joliot-Curie's application and at least try to repair some of the damage already done to our society's reputation both here and abroad.

Very truly yours,

A. M. Pappenheimer, Jr.  
Professor of Microbiology

AMF:ngn